

Appl. No.: 10/644,841

Reply to Office action of Oct. 9, 2008

Amendments to the Claims:

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. (Currently amended) A system for computers and/or computerized devices, comprising at least one of:
 - a. A computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged area~~ or ring below ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system;
 - b. A computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged area~~ or ring below ring 0 and/or within ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system, and wherein at least if said more privileged area is within ring 0, said control system and/or security system is adapted to catch exceptions caused by device drivers in ring 0 and/or by the operating system.
2. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the following exists:
 - a. A monitoring and capturing system, which monitors at least one of storage devices and communications devices;
 - b. A database of security rules, comprising at least one of: a set of default rules, a set of pre-distribution acquired rules that are good for many users of the selected operating system, and acquired additional user-defined rules or authorizations; and
 - c. A user interface, which can interact with the user in order to at least one of: learn acceptable behavior patterns, warn the user of perceived dangers, wait for his authorization whenever necessary, and allow the user to view and modify the database of authorizations.

3. (Original) The system of claim 2 wherein at least one of:
 - a. Said user interface at least also warns the user explicitly in cases of potentially highly dangerous activities;
 - b. Said database comprises also at least learned statistics of normal and reasonable behavior of programs in the user's computer;
 - c. Said user interface at least also allows the user to view statistics of behavior of important programs and especially programs that are allowed to access communication channels, especially in what is related to sending and receiving data over the communication lines;
 - d. Said database comprises also at least a log of the questions that the Security System asked the user and his replies kept at least for a certain period; and
 - e. Said database comprises also at least, when needed, a log of suspicious activities detected kept at least for a certain period.
4. (Previously amended) The system of claim 2 wherein the security rules and/or functions performed by the Security System comprise at least one of the following:
 - a. Constantly monitoring the security-sensitive elements of the computer system, and mainly all relevant peripheral device activities, and especially storage devices and communication devices, and detecting and selectively intercepting security-sensitive behaviors, suspicious behaviors and dangerous behaviors and acting upon them in according with default and acquired sets of security rules;
 - b. At least one of Warning the user and request for authorization and automatic interception for security-sensitive activities and especially any first-time attempts to access communication channels;
 - c. Enabling the user to request at least one of automatic blocking and warning of the user of any attempts of external programs from the network to connect to the user's computer through the communication channels;
 - d. Interception and more explicit warning of the user about potentially highly dangerous activities;
 - e. Warning the user about significant statistical deviations from normal
 - f. behaviors of applications and operating system and especially as relates to suddenly sending out large amounts of data;

- g. Enabling the user to request enforcing of at least one of additional limitations on the communication ports allowed to be opened and when needed also limitations on types of protocols allowed;
- h. Monitoring and intercepting as much as possible all attempts of applications to gain direct port accesses to security sensitive devices and especially the storage media and the communication channels;
- i. Implementing Virtual Shared data areas on the storage media, for at least one of temporary files and accessing keys in the registry and
- j. other files, so that at least some programs are given the illusion that they are accessing the shared area, but in reality are each redirected to a separate private area; and
- k. Pushing at least part of the operating system from the most privileged processor ring to a lower privilege ring and enabling needed functions to run in said lower privilege ring.

5. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 wherein a hardware element is used which monitors hardware accesses, so that the Security System and/or said hardware element can discover events where access has been made to at least one of storage devices and communications devices without an apparent corresponding event on the system level.

6. (Previously canceled).

7. (Previously canceled).

8. (Previously canceled).

9. (Currently amended) A method for computers and/or computerized devices, comprising at least one of the following steps:

- a. Using a computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged area or ring below ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0~~, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system;
- b. Using a computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged area or ring below ring 0 and/or within ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0~~, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system, and wherein at least if said more privileged area is within ring 0, said control system

and/or security system is adapted to catch exceptions caused by device drivers in ring 0 and/or by the operating system.

10. (Previously amended) The method of claim 9 wherein and at least one of the following exists:

- a. Using a monitoring and capturing system, which monitors at least one of storage devices and communications devices;
- b. Using a database of security rules, comprising at least one of: a set of default rules, a set of pre-distribution acquired rules that are good for many users of the selected operating system, and acquired additional user-defined rules or authorizations; and
- c. Using a user interface, which can interact with the user in order to at least one of: learn acceptable behavior patterns, warn the user of perceived dangers and wait for his authorization whenever necessary.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein at least one of:

- a. Said user interface at least also warns the user explicitly in cases of potentially highly dangerous activities;
- b. Said database comprises also at least learned statistics of normal and reasonable behavior of programs in the user's computer;
- c. Said user interface at least also allows the user to view statistics of behavior of important programs and especially programs that are allowed to access communication channels, especially in what is related to sending and receiving data over the communication lines;
- d. Said database comprises also at least a log of the questions that the Security System asked the user and his replies kept at least for a certain period; and
- e. Said database comprises also at least, when needed, a log of suspicious activities detected kept at least for a certain period.

12. (Previously amended) The method of claim 10 wherein the security rules and/or functions performed by the Security System comprise least one of the following:

- a. Constantly monitoring the security-sensitive elements of the computer system, and mainly all relevant peripheral device activities, and especially storage devices and communication devices, and detecting

and selectively intercepting security-sensitive behaviors, suspicious behaviors and dangerous behaviors and acting upon them in according with default and acquired sets of security rules;

- b. At least one of Warning the user and request for authorization and automatic interception for security-sensitive activities and especially any first-time attempts to access communication channels;
- c. Enabling the user to request at least one of automatic blocking and warning of the user of any attempts of external programs from the network to connect to the user's computer through the communication channels;
- d. Interception and more explicit warning of the user about potentially highly dangerous activities;
- e. Warning the user about significant statistical deviations from normal behaviors of applications and operating system and especially as relates to suddenly sending out large amounts of data;
- f. Enabling the user to request enforcing of at least one of additional limitations on the communication ports allowed to be opened and when needed also limitations on types of protocols allowed;
- g. Monitoring and intercepting as much as possible all attempts of applications to gain direct port accesses to security sensitive devices and especially the storage media and the communication channels;
- h. Implementing Virtual Shared data areas on the storage media, for at least one of temporary files and accessing keys in the registry and other files, so that at least some programs are given the illusion that they are accessing the shared area, but in reality are each redirected to a separate private area; and
- i. Pushing at least part of the operating system from the most privileged processor ring to a lower privilege ring and enabling needed functions to run in said lower privilege ring.

13. (Previously amended) A security system for computers and/or computerized devices, comprising at least one of:

- a. A system that creates automatic segregation between programs that is applied to at least one of the hard disks and other storage devices wherein files and directories are involved;
- b. A system that creates automatic segregation between programs which the user can access, so that the directory structure in which a file is located automatically affects the access rights of other programs to it;

- c. A security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments so that by default programs are allowed to fully access files only within their natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which the program is installed and its sub-directories;
 - d. A computer security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments so that at least for some programs each program is allowed to at least one of access, read, write, execute, create, and delete files only within its natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which it is installed and its sub-directories, and access to necessary system areas is based on virtual sharing.
- 14. (Previously amended) A security method for computers and/or computerized devices, comprising at least one of the following steps:
 - a. Using a system that creates automatic segregation between programs that is applied to at least one of the hard disks and other storage devices wherein files and directories are involved;
 - b. Using a system that creates automatic segregation between programs which the user can access, so that the directory structure in which a file is located automatically affects the access rights of other programs to it;
 - c. Using a security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments so that by default programs are allowed to fully access files only within their natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which the program is installed and its sub-directories;
 - d. Using a computer security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments so that at least for some programs each program is allowed to at least one of access, read, write, execute, create and delete files only within its natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which it is installed and its sub-directories, and access to necessary system areas is based on virtual sharing.
- 15. (Original) The Security system of claim 1 wherein the computer is at least one of: cellular phone, car computer, and other computerized gadget, and wherein at least one of:
 - a. Access to highly sensitive data, such as credit card details or private encryption keys, needs explicit permission by the user.

- b. Any attempt to automatically generate an outgoing communication needs explicit permission by the user.
- c. Any attempts to alter at least one of EMROMM and important system files and sensitive data, need explicit permission by the user.

16. (Currently amended) ~~The system of claim 13 wherein the user is an organization and at least some of the control over authorizations is in the hands of at least one of: at least one central authority, and the system administrator.~~ The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ring below ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system;

17. (Previously canceled).

18. (Previously canceled).

19. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 wherein by default at least for some programs each program can only see itself and the operating system and the computer resources that it is allowed to see, so that it lives in a Virtual Environment (VE).

20. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the Security System is used by at least one user and the security system identifies if the user or the an application initiated at least one of accessing a file outside the natural environment or virtual environment of the program, and at least one potential security-risk command which is at least partially related the disk or other non-volatile storage device, and so can allow more flexibility and/or less limitations and/or no limitations if the command was initiated directly by the user than if it was initiated by the application.

21. (Previously canceled).

22. (Previously amended) The system of claim 13 wherein at least one of the following features exists:

- a. The Security System also makes sure that when it requests authorization no other programs can enter false answers as if they were entered by the user through one of the input devices;

- b. The Security System also makes sure that programs cannot create the false impression that certain actions were initiated by the user by falsifying user input through one of the input devices;
- c. In the cases where private keys are generated or stored by the browsers, additional rules are used in order to identify the directories where these keys are held;
- d. The communication with at least one of a keyboard and a mouse uses encryption in order to prevent falsifying user responses;
- e. The communication with at least one of a keyboard and a mouse uses encryption in order to prevent falsifying user responses, and said encryption includes also a date & time stamp;
- f. In order to protect the segregation of processes in memory, the Security System asks the user to explicitly authorize programs that he wants to allow to access APIs that allow accessing the memory of other processes;
- g. In order to prevent device drivers from accessing devices other than those that they are intended to access, each device driver must have a definite type indicator and is allowed to access only devices of the indicated type;
- h. Each device driver is also prevented from accessing other device drivers that can access other types of devices;
- i. Installed drivers can also be associated with Virtual Environments, and thus limited in the scope of their actions;
- j. High security protected areas are at least one of: encrypted, marked with a finger print, and automatically backed up to as least one more area for additional safety.

23. (Previously canceled).

24. (Previously canceled).

25. (Previously canceled).

26. (Previously canceled).

27. (Previously canceled).

28. (Currently amended) ~~The system of claim 13 wherein the Security System learns during the installation of new programs which files are related to them outside their directory tree. The method of claim 9 wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ring below ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0.~~

wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system;

29. (Previously canceled).

30. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the security system automatically blocks potentially highly dangerous activities or asks the user for explicit authorization, even if the user supposedly allowed this to an application through the dialog box.

31. (Previously canceled).

32. (Previously canceled).

33. (Currently amended) A computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or the an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged ring~~ below ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system.

34. (Previously canceled).

35. (Previously canceled).

36. (Previously canceled).

37. (Previously amended) The system of claim 13 wherein if an application changes after being given certain permissions, the user is notified about and asked again for permissions or such changes are automatically prevented or the changed application is automatically limited to a new VE.

38. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the following features exist:

- a. The security system intercepts the operating system the moment it is being loaded into memory and transfers it to a higher ring so that any attempt by the operating system to access ring 0 will cause a CPU exception, and in order to increase efficiency the security system rewrites on the fly each such command in the operating system code which is running in the computer's RAM to access instead the current ring in which it is in, so that the next time that line of code is accessed in memory, the exception will not occur anymore until the next boot.

- b. The security system transfers only physical device drivers to a less privileged ring in order to be able to control direct access to physical devices.
- c. The operating system itself transfers physical device drivers to a less privileged ring in order to be able to control direct access to physical devices.
- d. At least one of the physical device drivers and the operating system are still in ring 0 but there is at least one more privileged area within ring 0 which can catch exceptions caused by at least one of device drivers in ring 0 and the operating system itself.
- e. At least one of the physical device drivers and the operating system are still in ring 0 but there is at least one more privileged area below ring 0 which can catch exceptions caused by at least one of device drivers in ring 0 and the operating system itself.

39. (Previously canceled).

40. (Previously canceled).

41. (Currently amended) A computer system wherein at least one of device drivers and/or an operating system and/or parts of it are in ring 0 but there is at least one ~~more privileged area~~ or ring below ring 0 and/or within ring 0 which is more privileged than ring 0, wherein there is a control system and/or security system which runs below the operating system, and wherein at least if said more privileged area is within ring 0, said control system and/or security system is adapted to catch exceptions caused by device drivers in ring 0 and/or by the operating system.

42. (Currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one part of the security system which runs on a specific computer becomes ~~active~~ activated on said computer even if ~~the said~~ computer is booted from at least one of a floppy drive, CD, network drive, and any other source that is not the normal boot area.

43. (Currently amended) The system of claim 42 wherein at least one of the following features exist:

- a. Said activation is done by at least one of the BIOS and the processor itself before the normal boot sequence begins.

- b. If the security system discovers that the BIOS has been compromised or corrupted, it can at least one of issue a warning and restore it from various preferably hidden backups.
- c. The security system can determine that the bios has been compromised or corrupted by at least one of: if it was changed without authorization according to a digital signature and if it starts to behave suspiciously.
- d. When changes need to be made in at least one of the security system itself and the BIOS, a physical key needs to be physically attached to at least one of the computer ~~and~~and any of its peripheral devices.

44. (Previously canceled).

45. (Original) The system of claim 19 wherein if an application launches another application, the newly launched application is limited to the VE of the launching application.

46. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein if users download many files into a single download directory, the security system at least one of: uses context sensitive information, and detects if a downloaded program starts looking at files that were downloaded at different times or starts going over the entire directory or tries to modify other executables in that directory.

47. (Previously canceled).

48. (Previously canceled).

49. (Previously canceled).

50. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the security system replaces at least some of the Operating System's dialogue boxes and other components that can request input from the user, so that the Security System has more control on what is happening in them.

51. (Previously amended) The system of claim 19 wherein programs are allowed to send OS messages only to programs which are running within their own Virtual Environments.

52. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the Security system replaces at least some of the OS functions that deal with the OS message system, and

attaches to each message an identification that shows if the OS or another application is the source of the message, and the Security System allows certain messages to be initiated only by the OS.

53. (Previously canceled).

54. (Original) The system of claim 20 wherein at least one of the following features exist:

- a. In order to prevent misleading textual questions the Security system uses also at least partial semantic analysis of what the user is really being asked, by at least one of: analyzing sentence structures or at least significant word combinations and/or using various rules and/or a statistical database of commonly used questions.
- b. In order to prevent misleading textual questions the Security system guards at least the top line title of the dialogue box, so the when it is an "open file" dialogue box, it will always say so clearly, and if it is a "save file" dialog box it will always say so clearly.
- c. A new protocol is introduced for dialogue boxes, in which only the security systems runs completely the dialogue box and the programs have to indicate in a more structured format, what they want exactly.
- d. The security system automatically blocks potentially highly dangerous activities or asks the user for explicit authorization, even if the user supposedly allowed this to an application through the dialog box.

55. (Previously canceled).

56. (Previously amended) The system of claim 13 wherein the security system knows automatically about at least some highly important user files and directories, and at least one of the following features exist:

- a. Said files are at least one of ".doc" files and source code files, and said directories are at least directories containing such files, at least if these files were created by the user.
- b. The security system can identify strategic files and/or directories by at least one of: using predefined rules; automatically marking programs as highly strategic according to the number and/or types of authorizations they have and/or by the fact that the user is using them interactively more than other programs or files or directories; and

allowing the user explicitly to mark certain directories and/or certain file name extensions as highly protected.

- c. The user is explicitly warned by the security system about attempts of programs to access highly important user files or directories even if the user supposedly allowed the program to access them through the dialogue box – if the program is not normally associated with such files or directories.

57. (Previously canceled).

58. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the security system prevents running processes from at least one of: Changing their code in memory, and Changing the disk file of their executable code.

59. (Previously canceled).

60. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the security system also prevents applications from accessing directly lower level functions that can access hard disks and/or other devices except by calling them through the normal kernel interface.

61. (Original) The system of claim 19 wherein at least one of the following features exist:

- a. Unless explicitly given additional rights by the user all of the actions initiated by a program are automatically limited to the scope of its own VE.
- b. When a new program is being installed the user has the option of choosing a new VE for that program, or allowing it to become an update of an already existing VE, or allowing it to have free access to the entire computer.
- c. The user is able to correct mistakes, at least for a certain time, by undoing the installation of programs, at least when they are installed in a limited VE.
- d. If shared drives are allowed, only the user is allowed to access files on shared drives on other computers, or each program is allowed to see and access in each shared drive only the same VE that it has on its own computer.

- e. If the user allows a newly installing program to inherit or overwrite an existing VE, the security system first creates a virtual private environment copy of the modified directories, at least for a certain period, so that the user can still request to undo this if he made a mistake, at least for a certain period.
- f. The security system backs up all the changed files or directories at least for a certain time and/or keeps a rollback log of all changes that were made to the relevant files and directories or even of all changes anywhere in at least one of the hard disk and other non-volatile storage devices, in order to enable the undo if the user needs it.
- g. Even when the user allows a program to be installed without VE limitations, any changes in the entire hard disk after or during the installation, are completely undo-able at least for a certain time period.
- h. Even if the user requested installation without VE limitation, the new program is first installed in a separate VE, and only after a certain time period or after the user authorizes it (and/or for example after the security system checks various parameters to see that things seem ok), the VE limitations are lifted or this VE is merged with the unlimited VE.

62. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein any changes that happen on at least one of the hard disk and other nonvolatile storage devices and other connected media are completely undo-able at least for a certain time period, by keeping a rollback log of all changes or of all significant changes.

63. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the security system can identify at least one of strategic files and strategic directories by at least one of: using predefined rules; automatically marking programs as highly strategic according to the number and/or types of authorizations they have and/or by the fact that the user is using them interactively more than other programs or files or directories; and allowing the user explicitly to mark certain directories and/or certain file name extensions as highly protected.

64. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one of the Security System and the Operating system can alert the user and/or automatically prevent or take action if a malicious program tries to misuse at least one of the CPU resources, the free RAM memory, and the free space of the disk and/or other

non-volatile storage devices and/or if it creates on purpose an artificial load on disk activity, and wherein at least one of the following is done:

- a. Taking over the free disk space is prevented by a default quota for each newly installed application, which can be changed by the user if needed.
- b. Creating false load on the disk activity can be prevented by detecting automatically suspect behaviors.
- c. The Security System and/or the Operating System automatically shows to the user and/or to the administrator in an organization, whenever any of the CPU and/or RAM resources become too low, or whenever significant deviations from normal statistics in this resources are detected, at least one of: Which applications are taking up most of these resources, the percent they are using, and, to the extent possible, what they are doing, and the VE of these processes.
- d. Automatically detecting by at least one of software and hardware in the CPU itself at least one of entering the CPU into useless loops and other suspect activities in the CPU.
- e. The OS or the Security System requests authorization from the user if a program requests Real-time priority or any other priority that can significantly slow down other processes, at least the first time it tries to get such priority or unless the user gives it such a privilege from then on.

65. (Previously canceled).

66. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein the hardware of the CPU and/or the hardware of the disk itself does not allow any access to a file unless the software that tries to access it is identified as its rightful owner, by at least one of providing the appropriate password, and other means.

67. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein at least in one mode and for at least some of the files and/or directories there is an indication near the file and/or directory if it is a real file or a virtual file and/or the user and/or the administrator can see by clicking on the file and/or by the color of the file name or icon and/or by other indication, to which virtual environment it belongs.

68. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein embedded objects or plug-ins are executed each at a separate VE but appear visually integrated, and at least one of the following features exists:

- a. There is no real connection between the two objects other than their internal communication stream;
 - b. The security system filters or controls the communication between the two objects;
 - c. The visual integration is implemented with the aid of a graphical proxy, which makes a combination of programs look as if they are integrated, while in reality they run in different VEs;
 - d. Each COM (Component Object Module) server is allowed to run only in one VE, thus avoiding the situation where the same COM server could be giving services at the same time to programs that are on separate VEs.
69. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 further comprising a system for learning normal behavior statistics, and automatic detection of at least one of: unusual disk activity of applications and unusual sending out large amounts of data.
70. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 comprising a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments that is applied to at least one of hard disks and other storage media and/or other resources, wherein there are resources that are shared between virtual environments so that programs that are in a Virtual Environment are given the illusion that they are accessing said shared resources, but in reality if these programs make changes not explicitly allowed by the user in said shared resources, copy-on-write is used and/or said programs are redirected to another area so that said changes are only made in the virtual environment.
71. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 comprising a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments that is applied to at least one of hard disks and other storage media, wherein at least for one or more shared resources and/or for one or more programs and/or in one or more conditions if a program makes a change or changes in a shared resource, copy-on-write is used and/or said program is redirected to another area so that said changes are only made in the virtual environment and/or in said other area to which the program is redirected.
72. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 comprising a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments that is applied to at least one hard disk and/or other non-volatile storage devices,

wherein the system enables the user to interact with an integrated view of the desktop and/or of the file system, based on merged views of virtual environments, so that the user can interact with programs that are in a virtual environment without having to switch to their virtual environment.

73. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 comprising a system that creates automatic segregation between programs that is applied to at least one of the hard disks and other storage devices wherein files and directories are involved.
74. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 comprising a system that creates automatic segregation between programs which the user can access, so that the directory structure in which a file is located automatically affects the access rights of other programs to it.
75. (Previously amended) The system of claim 1 comprising a security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments so that by default programs are allowed to fully access files only within their natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which the program is installed and its sub-directories.
76. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 comprising a system and/or firewall that prevents programs from unauthorized trapping of the keyboard device in order to catch keystrokes of other programs, in order to prevent theft of data from the user's hard disk or other non-volatile storage device.
77. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments is used that is applied to at least one of hard disks and other storage media and/or other resources, wherein there are resources that are shared between virtual environments so that programs that are in a Virtual Environment are given the illusion that they are accessing said shared resources, but in reality if these programs make changes not explicitly allowed by the user in said shared resources, copy-on-write is used and/or said programs are redirected to another area so that said changes are only made in the virtual environment.
78. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments is used that is applied to at least one of hard disks and other storage media, wherein at least for one or

more shared resources and/or for one or more programs and/or in one or more conditions if a program makes a change or changes in a shared resource, copy-on-write is used and/or said program is redirected to another area so that said changes are only made in the virtual environment and/or in said other area to which the program is redirected.

79. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein a system for segregation between programs and/or between virtual environments is used that is applied to at least one hard disk and/or other non-volatile storage devices, wherein the system enables the user to interact with an integrated view of the desktop and/or of the file system, based on merged views of virtual environments, so that the user can interact with programs that are in a virtual environment without having to switch to their virtual environment.
80. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein a system that creates automatic segregation between programs is used that is applied to at least one of the hard disks and other storage devices wherein files and directories are involved.
81. (Previously amended) The method of claim 9 wherein a system is used that creates automatic segregation between programs which the user can access, so that the directory structure in which a file is located automatically affects the access rights of other programs to it.
82. (Previously amended) The method of claim 9 wherein a security system capable of automatic segregation of programs into their natural environments is used so that by default programs are allowed to fully access files only within their natural environment, which is mainly the directory in which the program is installed and its sub-directories.
83. (Previously amended) The method of claim 9 wherein a security system and/or firewall is used that identifies if the user or an application initiated at least one of accessing a file outside the natural environment or virtual environment said application, and at least one potential security-risk command which is at least partially related to the hard disk or other non-volatile storage device, and so can allow more flexibility and/or less limitations and/or no limitations if the command was initiated directly by the user than if it was initiated by the application.

84. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein a system and/or firewall is used that prevents programs from unauthorized trapping of the keyboard device in order to catch keystrokes of other programs, in order to prevent theft of data from the user's hard disk or other non-volatile storage device.
85. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one program is given the illusion that it installed itself on the root of a drive, but in fact it is installed in a lower directory.
86. (Currently amended) The system of any claim ~~7~~1 wherein said copy-on-write and/or redirection to another area for making changes is used at least in one or more cases when a program does not have sufficient rights to make changes in one or more files or directories or other shared resources.
87. (Currently amended) The system of claim ~~1~~86 wherein "at least in one or more cases" means "at least for one or more programs".
88. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein at least for some programs the program is automatically first installed in a separate VE even if the user did not request to install the program within a virtual environment, and only after a certain time period or after the user authorizes it, and/or after the security system checks various parameters to see that things seem ok, the VE limitations are lifted or this VE is merged with the unlimited normal environment.
89. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein programs can be given the illusion that they have accessed shared keys in the registry, while in practice they are redirected each to its individual private file of relevant registry keys.
90. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein said copy-on-write and/or redirection to another area for making changes is implemented at least when some programs need to install certain files in system directories.
91. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said copy-on-write and/or redirection to another area for making changes is implemented at least when some programs need to install certain files in system directories.

92. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein virtual shared directories are implemented by giving a program a logical view of the shared directory or of only some of the files in it, so that if the program is allowed to see the file it sees the original copy, but if it changes files in the shared directory, said files will in reality be copied into files in the program's individual private area and changed only there.
93. (Previously presented) The method of claim 9 wherein virtual shared directories are implemented by giving a program a logical view of the shared directory or of only some of the files in it, so that if the program is allowed to see the file it sees the original copy, but if it changes files in the shared directory, said files will in reality be copied into files in the program's individual private area and changed only there.
94. (Previously presented) The system of claim 1 wherein at least one Internet browser is by default automatically limited to its natural environment or virtual environment.